



## **Minutes Desert Conservation Commission Feb. 2. 2021**

**Minutes of the Desert Conservation Commission meeting held on Feb. 2, 2021, 3:30 p.m.,  
Meeting held via Cisco WebEx Events**

**Members Present:**

Dr. Shereen Lerner – Chair  
Ricardo Juan Leonard  
Kimberly Gaffney-Loza  
Aireona Raschke  
Jane Neuheisel  
Brian Farling  
Laura Stewart  
Donald Burt

**Members Absent:**

**City Staff Present:**

Craig Hayton, Staff Liaison- Deputy Community Services Director- Parks and Recreation  
Tanya Chavez, Senior Management Assistant – Community Services Administration  
Jonae Harrison, Equity and Inclusion Manager  
Braden Kay, Sustainability Director

Upon the establishment of a quorum, meeting was called to order at 3:34 p.m. by Chair Shereen Lerner.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

None

**Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Motion made by Brian Farling to approve the Nov. 10 2020 meeting minutes.

Seconded: Kimberly Gaffney-Loza

Decision: Motion Approved, 9-0

Ayes: Shereen Lerner, Ricardo Juan Leonard, Kimberly Gaffney-Loza, Aireona Raschke, Jane Neuheisel, Brian Farling, Laura Stewart and Donald Burt

Nays: n/a

Abstain: n/a

Absent: n/a

**Agenda Item 3 – New Commission Member Introductions**

New Commissioners Don Burt and Laura Stewart provided a brief introduction of themselves.

Don Burt is a Geology professor at ASU and is representative from an academic institution. He has lived here for 45 years and he has been an enthusiast long before it was a preserve.

Laura Stewart is Wildlife Biologist with 20 years' experience. She is representing expert in Sonoran Desert flora and fauna. She works for an environmental consulting company and does a lot of work with environmental compliance.

**Agenda Item 4 – 2021 Advisory Commission Chair/Vice-Chair Officers**

Agenda Item tabled to accommodate presentations from staff

**Agenda Item 5 – Equity and Inclusion**

Equity and Inclusion Manager Janae Harrison provided a PowerPoint Presentation that included:

- Discussed fundamentals of diversity v. inclusion v. equity
  - Including awareness as individuals and departments of need to provide equity and the need of residents/businesses to receive
    - Understanding this helps to further DCC priorities and education and engagement of those previously underrepresented or marginalized in conservation conversations
  - Including awareness of ideas of privilege, of any sort
- Introduced to Council Performance Measures and how connected to importance of our work
- Discussed how data can help predict trends and be preventative
  - Example: opioid and COVID-19 wastewater analysis
- Shared diversity office components
  - Policy
  - Program
  - Training
- Showed equity map and how using the map helps with understanding community needs

**Agenda Item 6 – Sustainability**

Sustainability Director Braden Kay presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Climate Action Plan 2021 Update. The presentation included:

- Provide space & listen to build collaboration with community and improve upon the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2019
  - Co-create a process to engage stakeholders
  - Co-create actionable items that are important to stakeholders
- Outcomes
  - Equitable climate action strategies that best serve our community
  - Partnerships for decarbonization and resilience to extreme heat
- What is Equitable Climate Action
  - Advocates for justice people and the planet

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- Identifies ways in which injustices between marginalized communities and the earth are interconnected
    - Does not minimize or silence social justice
  - Climate Action Plan 2019
    - 1st Climate Action Plan Areas of Focus
      - Energy
      - Transportation
      - Resilience to Extreme Heat
    - Highlight Actions
      - Resilient Energy Hubs
      - Transportation Demand Management
      - Green Infrastructure
      - Green Construction Code
  - Climate Action Plan 2021 Update
    - Listening Phase: June – Dec. 2020
    - Planning Phase: Jan. 2021-Aug. 2021
    - Review and Approval Phase: Aug. – Nov. 2021
    - Stakeholder Groups:
      - Built Environment Professionals
      - Business Leaders
      - Equity and Social Justice Leaders
      - Faith-Based and Non-profit Organizations
      - Neighborhoods and the General Public
      - Youth and Students
    - Engagement:
      - Listening Sessions (2nd Round)
      - Climate Justice Outreach and Training
      - Highlight action policy adoption
      - Cool Kids
      - March Forum
      - Storywalks
      - Social Media
    - Guiding Principles - Tempe's CAP 2021 Update will incorporate Guiding Principles to ensure quality and effective climate action is taken:
      - Fiscal Responsibility
      - Equity
      - Engagement
      - Enterprise
      - Effectiveness and Evidence
    - Next Steps
      - Identify other stakeholders to involve
      - Create and share storywalks and social media
      - Identify specific climate actions to collaborate on
      - Adopt policy on highlight actions
    - Moving Forward – We will advance climate action by:
      - Grant applications: arts engagement, equity, schools
      - ASU partnerships including coursework
      - Adopting policy

- Investing in infrastructure and programs

Staff will work with stakeholder groups on: Policy development Pilot projects: green infrastructure & neighborhood grants. Staff wants to partner with you to accelerate equitable climate action in Tempe.

### **Agenda Item 7 – Moeur Park Improvements**

Craig Hayton presented on Moeur Park improvements that included:

- Background, Location and History
  - Eastern/Desert/upper portion within Papago Preserve
  - Western/Turf/lower portion not within Papago Preserve
- Project Scope
  - Funded through SRPMIC grant & Parks CIP
  - Restore historic lower ramadas
  - Replace upper ramadas
  - Accessibility
  - Landscape
  - Lighting
  - Site furnishings
- Initial Concepts
  - Two concepts
  - Picnic Ramadas
    - Concept A: Single-slanted roof
    - Concept B: Cantilevered
    - Concept C: Dual-slanted roof
- Timeline
  - Virtual public meeting – Tuesday, 2/16
  - Online public survey – 2/16 thru 2/28
  - Historic Preservation Commission – Wednesday, 2/10
  - Design – through summer 2021
  - Construction – early 2022
- Commission members provided input on ramada concepts and park layout: ensure ramada placement/orientation maximizes of shade, direct rain from ramadas to plantings, utilize native species and pollinators, add more trees in the upper and lower sections of the park to increase shade, and provide education signage for edible plants.

### **Agenda Item 8 – Operational Items**

1. Kim Gaffney-Loza and Aireona Raschke presented on Desert Defenders, a collaborative program focusing on identifying invasive plant species. Train community scientists to use an application where they are finding focal species (stink net). Once the mapping is done the information can be submitted to COT to see what management actions needed to be taken (if any). The group would try to support the COT in this initiative. Kim had a couple of contacts for volunteers. She was able to gather seven volunteers that have went through a basic orientation. They will have an in-person walk though on how to map these through an application.
2. Papago BMX Area –
  - a. Location - northern area in the preserve by the water plant
  - b. History – work to ensure boundaries won't grow

- c. Plan – work to develop a preserve maintenance plan

**Agenda Item 9 – Future Agenda Items**

- Select DCC Chair and Vice-Chair
- Request additional agenda items
- 2021 Advisory Commission Chair/Vice-Chair Officers
- New Commissioner introductions

**Agenda Item 10 – Upcoming Public Meetings & Announcements**

- Feb 16 Moeur Park Improvement Public Meeting
- April Parks and Recreation Master Plan Meeting

**Meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.**

Prepared by: Tanya Chavez, Senior Management Assistant, (480) 858-2215

Reviewed by: Craig Hayton, Deputy Community Services Director- Parks and Recreation,  
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